

Why Safe Routes to School?

Safer routes

Safe Routes to School programs help communities create safer walking and biking routes in the vicinity of schools so parents are comfortable allowing their children to walk and bike to school.

Healthier children

In the past decade, the number of active children in the United States has decreased and the number of overweight children has increased. To reverse this trend *Safe Routes to School* programs encourage children to be more active by walking and biking to school.

Cleaner environment

As more children walk and bicycle to school, traffic volume and congestion decreases. Reducing the number of vehicles in the vicinity of schools reduces the risk of crashes, improves air quality and decreases health problems such as asthma.

Find out more

Whether you are a parent, teacher or a community member you can start a *Safe Routes to School* program.

Contact

Renee Callaway

Safe Routes to School Coordinator
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
4802 Sheboygan Avenue, Room 951
P. O. Box 7913
Madison, WI 53707-7913
(608) 266-3973
srts@dot.state.wi.us
www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/aid/saferoutes.htm



Safe Routes to School is a federally funded program that enables and encourages children ages K–8 to walk and bike to school.



Get started

Involve the entire community

Meet with teachers, parents, PTOs, government officials, law enforcement officers, politicians, local businesses, non-profit organizations, urban planners, engineers, neighborhood associations and local health officials. Involving every sector of the community produces the most effective and thorough plan. Start a committee that includes as many relevant groups as possible.

Collect data through surveys

Start by surveying how many children walk and bike to school and why they do or don't to help identify the current situation.

The information collected in surveys is crucial for discovering problems now and evaluating the program later.

Map your community

Create maps of the current routes children use to walk and bicycle to school. Indicate unsafe areas on those routes. Map potential safe, alternative routes to walk and bicycle to school.

Analyze problems

Based on information from the surveys and the mapping project, discuss the findings with the entire community. Make a list of the problems and possible solutions.

Identify projects that are needed in your community

Consider all the resources available to your community. *Safe Routes to School* funding may be available for some projects. Even though federal law requires the majority of the funding (minimum of 70 percent) to go towards infrastructure improvements, communities should also encourage walking and biking through non-infrastructure-related activities (minimum of 10 percent) such as educational and law enforcement efforts.

Safe Routes to School funding

The *Wisconsin Safe Routes to School* program will fund a variety of projects that encourage children to walk and bicycle safely to school. Projects eligible for *Safe Routes to School* funding must be within two miles of an elementary or middle school (kindergarten through eighth grade). Grants will be awarded through a statewide competitive process.

While *Safe Routes to School* projects are 100% fundable to the limit of the project award, it is important to note that sponsors will be required to complete the project and then request reimbursement from WisDOT upon completion.

Infrastructure-related projects

Funds available are for planning, design, and construction of infrastructure that will enable students to walk and bicycle to school such as:

- » Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements
- » Pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements
- » On-street bicycle facilities
- » Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- » Secure bicycle parking facilities
- » Sidewalk improvements

Non-infrastructure-related activities

Funds available are for programs and projects that encourage walking and bicycling to schools such as:

- » Developing a *Safe Routes to School* plan including costs for data gathering, analysis, and evaluation.
- » Public awareness campaigns and outreach to press and community leaders
- » Traffic education and enforcement in the vicinity of schools
- » Creation and reproduction of promotional and educational materials
- » Bicycle and pedestrian safety curricula, materials and trainers
- » Equipment and training needed to establish crossing guard programs
- » Modest incentives for contests or events

